United Nations E/CN.6/2010/NGO/40

Economic and Social Council

Distr.: General
15 December 2009

Original: English

Commission on the Status of Women
Fifty-fourth session
1-12 March 2010
Item 3 (a) of the provisional agenda*
Follow-up to the Fourth World Conference on Women and to the twenty-third special session of the General Assembly, entitled "Women 2000: gender equality, development and peace for the twenty-first century": implementation of strategic objectives and action in critical areas of concern and further actions and initiatives: review of the implementation of the Beijing Declaration and Platform for Action and the outcomes of the twenty-third special session and its contribution to shaping a gender perspective in the realization of the Millennium Development Goals

Statement by Anglican Consultative Council, a non-governmental organization in consultative status with the Economic and Social Council

The Secretary-General has received the following statement, which is being circulated in accordance with paragraphs 36 and 37 of Economic and Social Council resolution 1996/31.

* E/CN.6/2010/1.

09-65698 (E) 190110

Please recycle

Statement

"Women and men joined togetner in common faith, sacraments and ministry to contribute to the achievement of gender equality, development and peace"

1. The Anglican Consultative Council consists of 80 million members in 164 countries worldwide. As a priority group, the organization has invested in the training of over 200 women drawn from more than 50 countries in the fields of economic literacy, diplomacy and international advocacy. The membership advocates for the strategic objectives of the Beijing Platform for Action, the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women and the Millennium Development Goals.

2. The Council believes that activities to strengthen and deepen the impact of actions for the implementation of the Beijing Platform for Action need to start through prayer and service that ensure all rights, especially women's rights and basic needs, are met. The Council works in partnership with Governments, non-State actors and other faith communities, making deliberate connections between the instruments and tools for gender equality and women's empowerment. Its work includes reviews of the cumulative gains of the Convention for the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women, the Beijing Platform for Action and the gender targets of the Millennium Development Goals, factoring into its analysis the impact of the current financial and economic, climate and food crisis.

A. Achievements in and obstacles to gender equality and empowerment of women

3. The Council supports Governments that have worked towards the requirements contained in the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women for women's equality before the law.[1] We also note a number of national Governments, especially in the developing and Nordic countries, that have empowered women through affirmative action, thus enabling them to participate in decision-making and legislation.

4. **Obstacle**: This has not often translated into legislation and administrative practices to ensure women's equal rights. Nor have the legal instruments been linked to economic tools to ensure economic rights and access to economic resources in line with the strategic objective A.2 of the Beijing Platform for Action.

5. There have been mixed responses to gender equality and empowerment, even after the adoption of resolution 13.31 by the Council.[2] These desks provide gender-specific programmes that equip women with skills in leadership, decision-making, income generation, advocacy and economic literacy. In Rwanda, the Anglican Church has been active in publicly condemning gender-based violence, involving women in peace transformation and establishing women's clubs in all districts.

6. **Obstacle**: There are provinces that have never had women's desks and a few have closed them as a direct result of the economic and financial crisis. There are provinces that are still discussing the ordination of women that would place women in positions of leadership.

---

[1] See Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women, article 15.

[2] ACC resolution 13.31, which called for the establishment of Women or Gender Desks in all Anglican Provinces.

7. We therefore call for:

(a) Consideration of a sustainable way of achieving women's equality, which includes ensuring it is enshrined within national policies, laws and administrative instruments and tools;

(b) Innovative and research-based tools for advocacy and dialogue for church resolutions that shall strengthen and complement Government policy formulation, legislation in ways that can be adopted in various actions, including evangelism and Church growth initiatives, in accordance to resolution 14.02,[3] in addition to United Nations instruments;

(c) Partnerships built around tools and case studies for addressing areas of weaknesses in implementation, accountability for actions through development of common tools for assessing progress and gaps in achieving gender equality, development and peace;

(d) Tools to be used for comparing and evaluating progress throughout the different systems that can illustrate effective economic growth, poverty reduction and the right to development.

B. Actions for women in post-conflict situations

8. We support Security Council resolution 1888 (2009) on sexual violence in situations of armed conflict. Under the Convention for the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women, the Anglican Consultative Council has implemented post-conflict programmes of reconciliation and healing in Burundi and Rwanda, as well as in the Congo, the Sudan, and Melanesia. The Council has programmes to support post-conflict victims of violence and rape in the Democratic Republic of the Congo.

9. Rwanda has worked in tandem with the Council as part of the faith community to develop new legislation to empower women, widows and girls and ensure the protection of their rights, including inheritance and property. In addition, the action undertaken towards women's equal participation in conflict prevention, management and conflict resolution in post-conflict peacebuilding (as agreed at the fifty-second session of the Commission on the Status of Women in 2008) should be honoured. In light of the obstacles to these goals, we call for:

(a) The appointment of a special representative of the Secretary-General to drive, lead and coordinate all programmes derived from General Assembly and Security Council resolutions on violence;

(b) Provision of budget support for implementing conflict-related sexual violence programmes;

(c) Rapid responses to post-conflict domestic and gender-based violence, especially since emergency response is often removed after the conflict has been contained;

(d) Increased solidarity and partnership in counselling and trauma management for abused women in post-conflict situations;

[3] ACC resolution 14.02.

(e) The creation of a "women's protection and gender advisory on human rights"[4] within United Nations peacekeeping missions;

(f) Development of a timetable for reporting on and a monitoring mechanism for the prevention, management and resolution of conflict-related sexual violence, as outlined in Security Council resolutions 1325 (2000) and 1888 (2009);

(g) Observing "Special Sundays" as a means of repentance, conversion and renewal in ways that lead to deeper communion;

(h) Establishment of means of rapid response and relief that is more effective in addressing the situation of minorities living in difficult contexts; support for the needs of indigenous people;

(i) Strengthen alliances of relief and development agencies to improve coordination in development, relief and advocacy work and to share best practices;

(j) Governments that have not yet become signatories to the United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples should sign it, with the active support of the churches in those countries;

(k) In cases where indigenous people are in the minority, there is a need to take appropriate and necessary steps to assist the healing of indigenous families, including the protection of women and children from violence and the threat of human trafficking.

C. Gender-focused strategies for natural resource utilization

10. In terms of the environment, the global economy and support of vulnerable people and communities, the Anglican Consultative Council encourages all Governments and institutions to weigh the environmental and financial costs of institutional activities, including the church; to work towards increasing access to safe water as an inviolable human right; to enable faith communities to consider energy services as practical and strategic need and promote the use of renewable energy to encourage and support development of skills and sustainability of appropriate use of science and technology; to advocate sustainable, restorative economies with national Governments, the United Nations (through the Anglican Observers Office) and local constituencies.

D. Gender-focused community rebuilding

11. Local churches have done tremendous work in rebuilding communities, even in cases where there is violence and conflict. The Episcopal development aid agencies, other churches, and secular non-governmental organizations should increase their support to strengthen the implementation of social development programmes. Through local churches, such programmes address the strategic needs of females and males.

[4] Kathambi Kinoti, Association for Women's Rights in Development, 2009.

F. Mobilizing women and men for comprehensive gender-focused actions

12. In Thailand, human trafficking brings in 500 billion Thai baht [$US = 34 Thai baht] a year, a figure which is 50 to 60 per cent of the Government's annual budget, and more lucrative than the drug trade (Authorities and activists, Kulachada Chaipipat, "new law targets human trafficking", *The Nation*, 30 November 1997).

13. **Obstacles**: There is a reluctance to recognize the links between economic crises, poverty, trafficking in human persons and gender-based violence. In addition to being lucrative, trafficking in human persons is increasing as a result of the financial crisis, presenting a renewed need for both men and women to mobilize action in this regard. This financial and economic crisis has had a direct impact on households that goes beyond loss of housing and jobs. "The recent economic downturn is set to drive more vulnerable children and young people into exploitation by the global sex trade."[5]

> "If you ask me, the Government is not correcting the source of the problem," says Asipong. "It's just treating the symptoms. Poverty is a big contribution to the problem in Thailand, especially in the countryside. Street children and stateless children are extremely vulnerable to commercial sexual exploitation. We need to improve law enforcement and the economic welfare of children."[6]

14. The Anglican Consultative Council, in partnership with the United Nations Children's Fund (UNICEF) and ECPAT, held an Asian regional consultation to address the issue of trafficking, especially trafficking in girls

15. The best practice was from India where the Bishops, working closely with the community and local district authorities, have set up surveillance and monitoring and reporting systems for girls and any agents who may come into the community to recruit or traffic. They have also established a method for tracking and resettling trafficked girls and are now creating a means to economically empower the victims in their community

16. The International Anglican Women's Network has made efforts to promote women's concerns in the church and in society. The efforts have provided support to actions to eliminate violence against women. Such mobilization has enabled all provinces to participate in programmes and events that promote the rights and welfare of women, particularly as expressed in the Beijing Platform for Action and the Millennium Development Goals. Other efforts have included appropriate methods for the allocation of financial resources and actions to implement gender budgeting throughout the Anglican Communion.

---

[5] Carmen Madrinam, Executive Director of ECPAT international, the organization that authored the August 2009 report.

[6] Amanda Bissex, Chief of Child Protection, UNICEF, Thailand